VISIT…

FORCE OF NATURE

A Short Adventure for Four 18th-Level Player Characters

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Force of Nature is a short D&D adventure for four 18th-level player characters (PCs). The scenario begins in Porthaven, a large coastal city that is suddenly plagued by a series of natural disasters. Restoring the normal, tranquil environment of the area requires a whirlwind tour of the elemental planes.

The city of Porthaven can be placed along any coastline in your campaign that has mountains nearby. The adventure is designed to take place during a rainy season to help set the mood, although you can change the season without altering the adventure. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual* to run this adventure. In addition, you might want to keep *Book of Vile Darkness*, *Manual of the Planes*, *Fiend Folio*, and the *D&D Arms and Equipment Guide* handy, although the relevant information from them is included in the adventure. This scenario utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules, but it can easily be used with the 3.0 rules as well.

To get started, print out the adventure. Read through the scenario at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, threats, and major NPCs. Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Three hundred years ago, the coastal town of Porthaven was built on a site that was advantageous for trade but both geologically and meteorologically unstable. A volcano in the nearby mountains threatened to erupt and destroy the town, and earthquakes, tidal waves, and hurricanes were common. But the doughty townsfolk stayed and rebuilt after each disaster, determined to make the town prosper.

Eventually, a powerful sorcerer named Khyber Mercane saw the carnage that the unending natural disasters had wrought and decided to do something constructive. Recalling that he had once met some extraplanar creatures called modrons that favored order over chaos, he contacted them to see whether they could help. After discussing various options, Mercane struck a deal with the creatures: They would build and maintain a machine that would keep the town safe from the chaos of natural disasters, and in return, the townsfolk would keep a library of knowledge to pass along to them every year.

The machine worked, and the volcanic activity ceased. The harsh windstorms that had previously blown through the valley softened to mild breezes, and the high waves that had battered the shoreline shrank to harmless ripples before reaching the coast. The earthquakes that were once common occurrences no longer shook the land. Even the seasons seemed to even out until the temperatures rarely reached uncomfortable extremes. The crews of ships that had been through rough seas and stormy weather found the calm waters and friendly people of the town a welcome sight, as did many weary travelers along the coast. The town grew rapidly and soon became a bustling city.

For the first seven years, the modrons sent representatives to service the machine and gather the accumulated knowledge annually. Then the visits abruptly stopped. Khyber left to see what had happened to the modrons, but he never returned.

Worried about the safety of the untended machine, the clerics of Wee Jas built a temple around it to shield it from unauthorized visitors. But though this tactic did safeguard the machine, it also removed it from the people's sight, and eventually it was forgotten by most of the populace. Only a handful of the church's priests still know of its existence, and fewer still know its true purpose. Sister Mara, the most senior member of the clergy, is currently studying the history of the machine, and she has recently rediscovered its purpose and a few details of its maintenance. Realizing that the machine had not been refueled for many years, she warned the townsfolk that disasters might be imminent, but they scoffed at her dire predictions.

A few weeks ago, the machine ran out of fuel and shut down entirely. Shortly thereafter, Porthaven experienced its first earthquake since the activation of the machine, but the tremor was small and went unnoticed by most of the city's residents. The next sign that the city had lost its protection was much more obvious. This morning, the nearby volcano suddenly erupted, spewing forth a hellish river of molten rock and fire. The sky grew as black as night, and fiery ash began to rain down from the heavens. The earth beneath the city heaved upward, toppling structures and feeding the fires caused by the flaming debris. A great wall of water from the sea laid waste to Porthaven's docks, leaving many seagoing vessels and coastal homes either at the bottom of the bay or in ruins in the city's streets.

Currently, the city officials are busy evacuating the residents through several magic portals that are normally used only by merchants and adventurers. But these few portals cannot accommodate everyone, and the rivers of lava will reach what is left of the town in only a few short hours.

THE MACHINE

The machine is an arcane device constructed by the modrons to subdue the forces of nature and bring order out of chaos. It is fueled by raw elemental material from the four elemental planes.

The supporting structure for the machine is a cylinder 50 feet across and 500 feet deep. Inside is a delicate-looking structure built of massive gears, springs, levers, pistons and all sorts of other mechanical components. The entire machine is made of a strange, dull-colored metal that resembles bronze.

The upper 20 feet of the cylinder is free of machine components. Three 5-foot wide walkways span the diameter of this chamber about 10 feet down from its top, intersecting in the middle to divide the area into six equal sections. The machine's control panel sits on a round platform at the junction of the three walkways. Between the walkways, the floor is open, exposing the machine's workings below. The entrance to the cylinder lies at the end of one walkway, and at its other end is a stack of crates piled near the wall. Each of the other two walkways has a massive bronze door at either end.

The four bronze doors open to reveal solid walls unless the levers and buttons on the control panel are activated in the proper order. When its particular sequence is initiated, each door opens onto a portal to one of the four elemental planes.

Atop the control panel usually rest four 2-foot-diameter metal spheres that act as fuel cells for the machine. Each holds raw elemental material from one of the four elemental planes (air, earth, fire, and water). When a sphere is full, all the quartz crystals that adorn its surface pulse with an amber glow. At present, all the crystals are dull and lifeless, indicating that the spheres are empty.

The machine and all of its parts, including the spheres, are made of the same material as most of the plane of Mechanus, which looks like dull bronze. The machine is immune to all magic, and no part of it except the four spheres can travel through any magically created planar portal other than the four that are attached to the machine.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The characters must refuel an ancient machine built by the modrons before the forces of nature can destroy the entire city of Porthaven. To do so, they must visit each of the elemental planes and fill a metal sphere with raw elemental material. Sister Mara, a cleric of Wee Jas, has studied the machine enough to open its portals to two of the four elemental planes, but the characters must find their own way to the others.

In the Elemental Plane of Air, the party encounters several belkers and gains access to the Elemental Plane of Water through a planar vortex. The Elemental Plane of Water brings the characters into conflict with a vicious hammerfish. Entering the Elemental Plane of Earth brings them face-to-face with a new monster known as a magmal horror and introduces them to a rogue modron named Slag. This creature can open the final portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire, where a hellfire golem and several salamanders await the group.

Once the PCs have fully refueled the machine, nature's fury subsides, and the city can begin to rebuild.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs may come to Porthaven for any number of reasons. As the DM, it is your job to decide how best to involve the characters in the adventure. You can use the following hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to fit your campaign or the characters.

- The PCs are en route to some other location by ship. The captain decides to stop in Porthaven to wait out a vicious storm at sea, since the city is renowned for the calm waters of its port. But the storm only worsens as the ship draws closer to Porthaven, and the ship is hurled onto the shore by the mammoth waves in the harbor.
- A caravan that the PCs were escorting up the coast encountered high winds and torrential rains that caused mudslides and rockfalls along the road through the nearby mountains. The owners decided to put up in Porthaven for the night and assess the damage in the morning. When they arrived, Porthaven was a picture of beauty without a cloud in the sky, just as it typically was. But the sunrise brought natural disasters on a scale they had never seen before, and now the caravan personnel are waiting with the citizens for evacuation.
- While visiting the temple district of their own city, the PCs hear that the temple of Wee Jas is looking for help in evacuating a city that is about to be destroyed by earthquakes and an erupting volcano. A portal to Porthaven at the local temple of Wee Jas has brought many wounded evacuees for the clergy to tend, and they all beg for brave and stalwart adventurers to aid their kinfolk who are still trapped there.
- A party member receives a message by magic from a loved one in the city of Porthaven, begging for aid to escape the volcanic eruptions and earthquakes that have been plaguing the city since morning.
- Rumor holds that a treasure the PCs have been seeking lies buried beneath a dormant volcano near Porthaven. Just after they reach the city, however, the volcano gives ample evidence that it is no longer dormant. Alternatively, the eruption and accompanying earthquake could occur after the PCs have already entered the tunnels, trapping them in a cave-in.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins when the PCs reach Porthaven. Unless they take pains to pass for ordinary folk, they are soon recognized as powerful adventurers, either by personal reputation or by the gear they carry. Once the volcano erupts, they are asked to assist with the rescue effort, along with all of Porthaven's able-bodied citizens.

PORTHAVEN

The city of Porthaven has enjoyed fifty years of peace and prosperity.

♛ **Porthaven (Large City):** Conventional (mayor); AL LG; 40,000 gp limit; Assets 30,000,000 gp; Population 15,000; Mixed (11,850 humans, 1,350 halflings, 750 dwarves, 450 elves, 300 gnomes, 150 half-elves, 140 half-orcs, 10 drow); Size: 0.39 square miles, or 246 acres.

Authority Figures: Bergan Regal, human aristocrat 13; Onyx Deathcure, elf fighter 18; Bardak Firehand, dwarf fighter 17.

Important Figures: Vonn Stefos, human rogue 12/expert 7; Sister Mara, human cleric 14; Zax Grierson, human ranger 12; Khyber Mercane, human sorcerer 10/planeshifter 10.

Others: Adept 13 (2), adept 10 (1), adept 6 (4), adept 5 (2), adept 3 (8), adept 2 (20), adept 1 (70), aristocrat 12 (1), aristocrat 10 (1), aristocrat 6 (4), aristocrat 5 (2), aristocrat 3 (8), aristocrat 2 (20), aristocrat 1 (70), barbarian 13 (1), barbarian 11 (1), barbarian 10 (1), barbarian 6 (4), barbarian 5 (2), barbarian 3 (8), barbarian 2 (12), barbarian 1 (40), bard 13 (1), bard 12 (2), bard 6 (6), bard 3 (12), bard 2 (24), bard 1 (48), cleric 13 (1), cleric 10 (2), cleric 6 (2), cleric 5 (4), cleric 3 (4), cleric 2 (16), cleric 1 (34), commoner 19 (1), commoner 18 (1), commoner 10 (4), commoner 9 (2), commoner 5 (8), commoner 4 (4), commoner 2 (24), commoner 1 (12,751), druid 5 (1), druid 3 (1), druid 2 (5), druid 1 (10), expert 18 (1), expert 15 (1), expert 14 (1), expert 9 (2), expert 8 (2), expert 7 (2), expert 4 (12), expert 2 (24), expert 1 (420), fighter 12 (1), fighter 8 (2), fighter 6 (4), fighter 4 (4), fighter 3 (8), fighter 2 (24), fighter 1 (48), monk 12 (2), monk 10 (1), monk 6 (4), monk 5 (2), monk 3 (8), monk 2 (20), monk 1 (40), paladin 12 (1), paladin 11 (2), paladin 6 (6), paladin 3 (12), paladin 2 (24), paladin 1 (48), ranger 2 (1), ranger 1 (3), rogue 17 (1), rogue 12 (1), rogue 10 (1), rogue 8 (2), rogue 6 (2), rogue 5 (2), rogue

4 (4), rogue 3 (4), rogue 2 (20), rogue 1 (40), sorcerer 13 (1), sorcerer 12 (1), sorcerer 6 (6), sorcerer 3 (12), sorcerer 2 (24), sorcerer 1 (48), warrior 15 (1), warrior 14 (1), warrior 11 (1), warrior 8 (2), warrior 7 (2), warrior 6 (2), warrior 4 (8), warrior 3 (4), warrior 2 (24), warrior 1 (701), wizard 13 (1), wizard 12 (1), wizard 11 (1), wizard 6 (6), wizard 3 (12), wizard 2 (24), wizard 1 (48).

Gathering Information

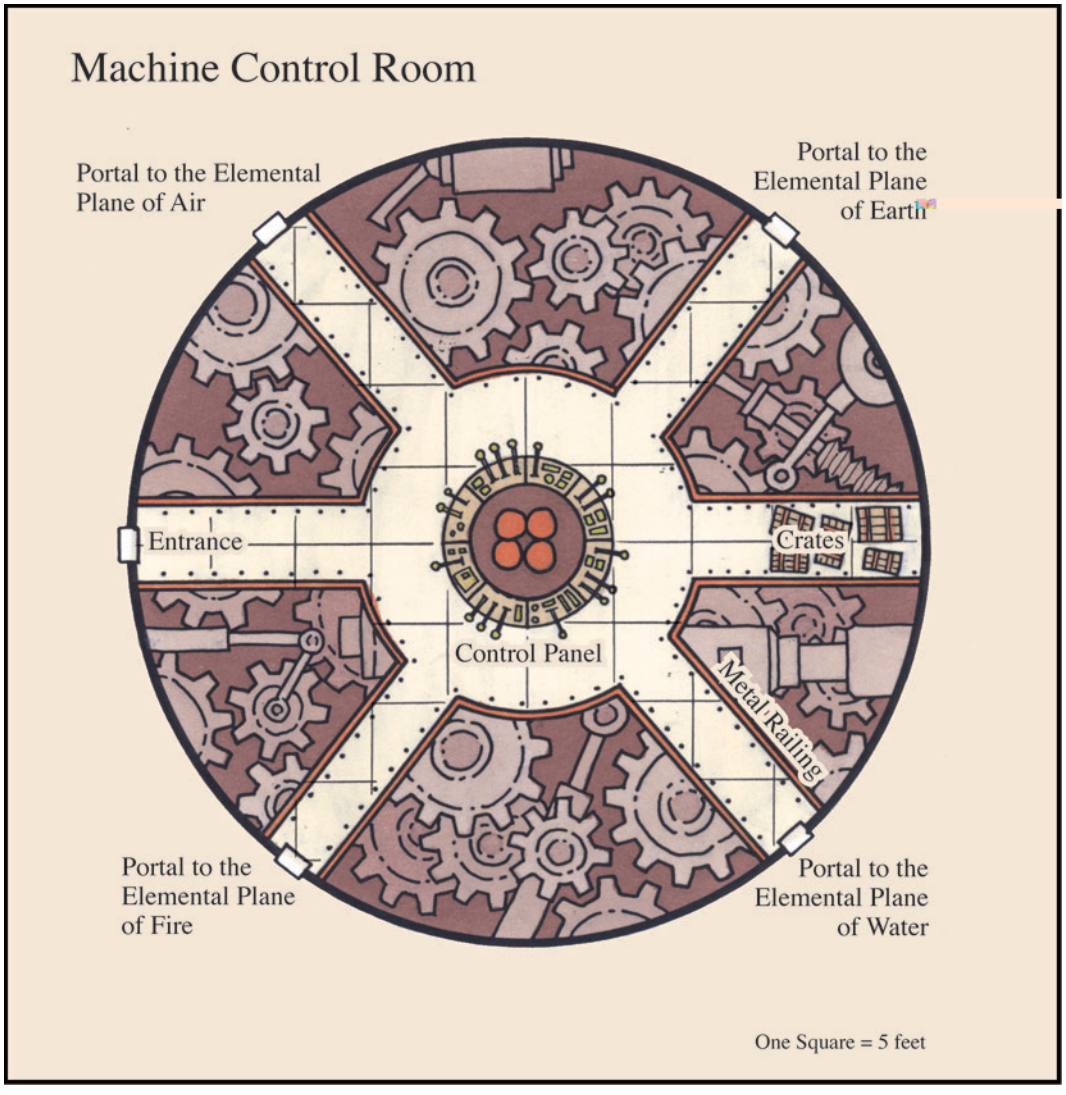
The characters are free to speak with anyone in Porthaven, and all the citizens answer their questions truthfully. No one except the city officials, however, has any inkling of what has actually caused the problem. The following individuals can acquaint them with the entire situation if asked. If the characters' prowess becomes known and they do not ask to speak with the city officials, those worthies request an audience with them instead.

Bardak Firehand: Bardak is the town constable and leader of Porthaven's militia. He has 20 fighters and 130 warriors in his service and can call up an additional 750 members of the local militia with a few hours notice.

Bergan Regal: Bergan is the duly elected mayor of Porthaven, but the post may as well be hereditary, since members of his family have served as mayor for almost a hundred years.

Onyx Deathcure: Onyx is the Regal family bodyguard and advisor to the city's militia. Once an adventurer, Onyx retired early and settled here with his drow wife to raise a family in peace. He has served the Regal family for more than thirty years.

Sister Mara: Sister Mara is the senior cleric of Wee Jas in Porthaven. A slender woman about 5 feet 8 inches tall, she has long, flowing blond hair and wears the familiar grey robes of Wee Jas's clergy. Over these, she wears silk vestments adorned with the holy symbol of Wee Jas and several hundred odd shapes that resemble interconnecting gears. Mara is one of only a handful of priests who have studied the machine.


Machine Control Room
Portal to the Elemental Plane of Air
Portal to the Elemental Plane of Earth
Entrance
Crates
Control Panel
Metal Railing
Portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire
Portal to the Elemental Plane of Water
One Square = 5 feet

Vonn Stefos: A former adventurer, Vonn now owns the largest shipping business in Porthaven. He also oversees the militia contingent that is assigned to patrol the docks.

Zax Grierson: Zax comes from a large family, all of whom have taken up the ranger profession. He has fully explored the volcanic tunnels in the nearby mountain ranges, and he often undertakes missions on behalf of the city. Earlier today, Zax led some junior clerics of Wee Jas through the Air Portal and has not returned.

MEETING WITH THE CITY OFFICIALS

If the characters agree to meet with the city officials, they are escorted to the temple of Wee Jas, where they are introduced to Bergan Regal, Onyx Deathcure, Bardak Firehand, Vonn Stefos, and Sister Mara. Bergan tells them that the city would welcome any help they can provide with the relief effort, but as adventurers of some renown, they might also be able to help in another way. Mara takes the story from here, explaining that an ancient artifact (the machine) hidden deep within the temple holds the key to the city's salvation. If restored to working order, this artifact could calm the elements and restore the city's former peace and serenity. The officials are willing to offer some payment, though they do need to keep the city's coffers well filled to handle the expense of rebuilding.

If the party agrees to assist, all the officials thank them profusely. Then all except Mara leave to oversee the evacuation.

A. THE MACHINE

Mara ushers the PCs through the halls of the temple to a large door made of what appears to be dull bronze. Behind it lies the machine—still an impressive sight even though its gears have stilled.

When the characters are ready to enter the machine, read or paraphrase the following aloud.

> The rumble of the volcano is audible in the distance as Mara opens the door to the machine. The circular chamber beyond is lit by an unseen source.
>
> Mara walks straight into the room along one of six narrow walkways that radiate like the spokes of a wheel around the chamber, meeting at a central platform. Five of the walkways end in doors, and the sixth—the one directly opposite the entry door—ends at the far wall, where several crates are stacked. Below the walkways, the inner workings of the machine extend endlessly down into the darkness.

> "I have been experimenting with the control panel in an attempt to activate the portals beyond the other four doors," says Mara, "and I have thus far been able to open two of them. The first door reveals a swirling pool of pale blue light, and the second a moss-green pool. The writings of the temple have led me to believe that these pools are portals to the Elemental Plane of Air and the Elemental Plane of Earth, respectively. Once activated, each portal stays open for only a single minute and cannot be opened again for 15 minutes. I hope that I can discover the proper sequence to activate the other two doors while you are collecting the elemental fuel, but I can guarantee nothing. You may have to find your own way to the Elemental Planes of Fire and Water."
>
> She takes up one of three identical bronze spheres, each about 2 feet in diameter, from the console. "These receptacles hold raw material from each of the elemental planes, which the machine uses for fuel. From what I have been able to determine, each of the receptacles must be taken to a different elemental plane and filled by depressing the levers in a particular order. Completely filling a sphere can take up to 30 minutes, and someone must constantly monitor its progress and make adjustments with the levers. I have written down the instructions for using each sphere.
>
> "According to the temple writings, each portal opens onto a stone platform that is protected from the dangers of the plane. The modrons stayed on these platforms while filling the spheres to avoid the need for spells that would ensure their survival.
>
> "When you are ready to leave, I will open the first portal for you. Thereafter, I will open it once every 15 minutes until you return. You had best take all the spheres with you at once, as well as the instructions, just in case you need to use another method to access one of the planes."
>
> Mara hesitates a moment, then says, "I must tell you that you are not the first to attempt this mission. Earlier today, I sent Zax Grierson, a ranger of some renown, through the blue portal with a party of clerics from this temple. He took one of the spheres along. That party has not returned, and we can only assume the worst. You'll have to find Zax and retrieve the sphere in order to complete the refueling."

Mara has studied texts that have been passed down from generation to generation about the workings of the machine. She can offer the following information in response to appropriate questions (no check necessary).

- The machine was built 300 years ago.
- Its construction was a joint project by a planeshifter named Khyber Mercane and some creatures known as modrons, from the plane of Mechanus.
- The machine somehow subdues the forces of nature in and around the city.
- Many years ago, Mara saw an odd creature that resembled a square metal box standing on a gear a few hundred feet below the walkways. She believes that it was a modron.
- All the modrons that maintained the machine in the past seem to have disappeared, and the machine ground to a halt just a few weeks ago. Hopefully, its only problem is a lack of fuel.
- Neither the machine nor the spheres can be affected by magic.
- The crates are filled with scrolls and parchments containing writings of the city's scholars and a history of Porthaven dating back almost 300 years. These were probably intended for the modrons, but no one has come to retrieve them in many years.

The PCs can access the Elemental Planes of Air and Earth via the portals attached to the machine. Mara will not be able to open the others during this adventure, but after spending 1 hour perusing the temple texts, a character can attempt a DC 35 Intelligence check to do so.

Alternatively, the PCs can use the portals that appear on those two planes to gain access to the others (see encounters B3 and C2). Or they can use *plane shift* or similar magic to get there themselves. If they use their own means from within the machine, they end up exactly where the machine's portals would have taken them—namely, the stone platforms that the modrons constructed on the target planes. On these platforms, the planar traits of these planes (see Planar Information, below) are not in effect.

If the characters use plane-traveling magic from any other location, they end up at a random spot on the target plane and are subject to all of its normal planar effects. The PCs gain the extraplanar subtype while they are on any of the Elemental Planes.

B. ELEMENTAL PLANE OF AIR

Stepping through the swirling blue portal places the PCs on the Elemental Plane of Air. Refer to the Appendix for the planar traits of this plane.

B1. SMOKE AND MIRRORS (EL 11)

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters step through the Air Portal.

> Beyond the swirling blue portal is a cloud of stone debris and smoke floating in an endless sky. Some 50 feet away drifts a stone platform bearing several piles of stone rubble. A corpse wearing the robes of the clergy of Wee Jas floats lifelessly a few feet away, and several other bodies float near the ruins. Some distance away, three blue forms float near a swirling storm of wind and rain.

Zax Grierson, the town's foremost ranger, led some clerics of Wee Jas through the portal earlier today, but they were set upon by belkers as soon as they arrived. All members of the expedition died in the battle, and the portal platform broke loose from its moorings. The PCs are subject to the planar traits of this plane until they can reach this platform.

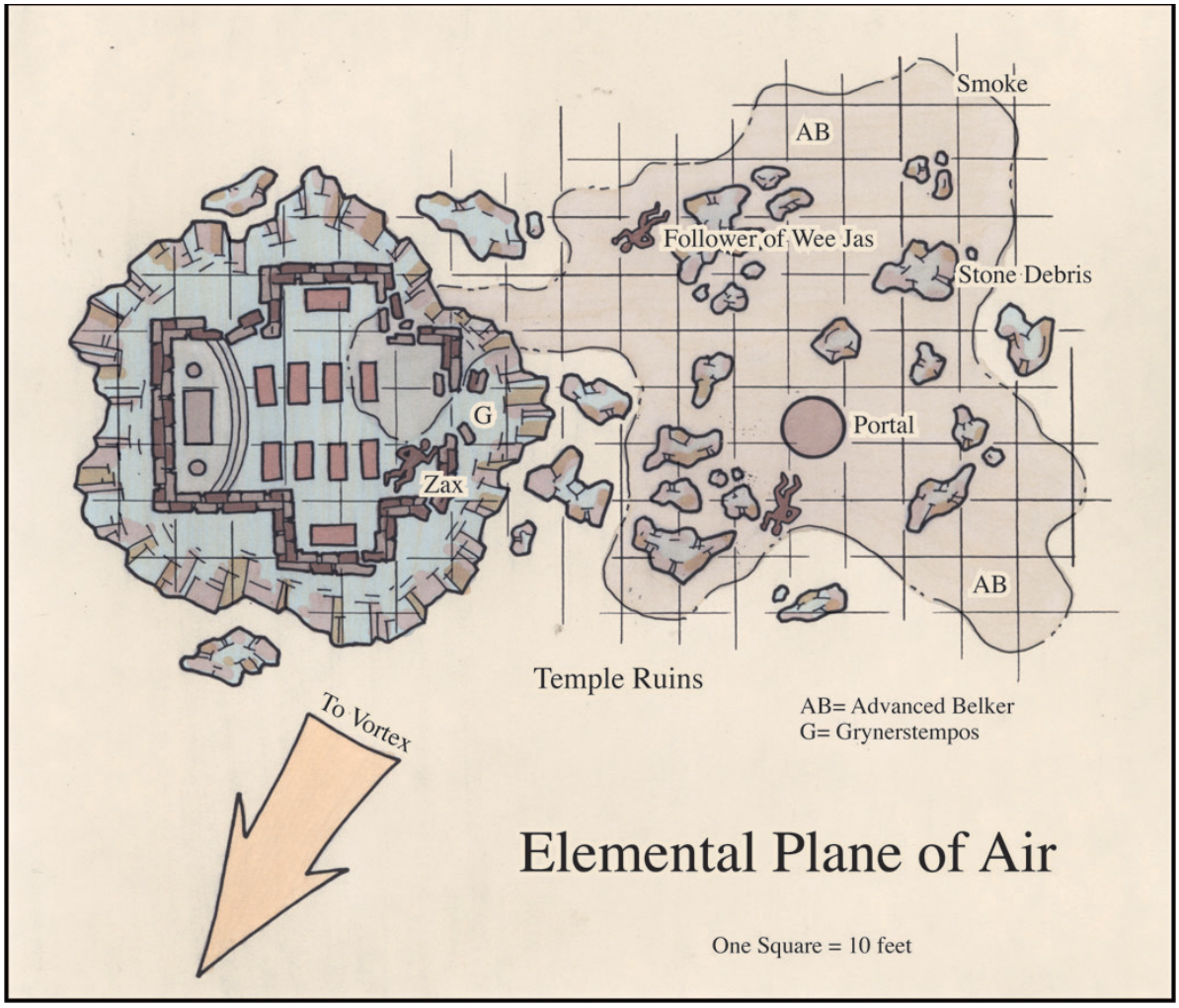
Zax himself was slain by Grynerstempos, a belker soul eater currently hiding in the rubble on the platform. This creature has hidden Zax's corpse in the rubble and assumed his form. Now it is lying in wait for any rescue parties that may arrive (see encounter B2, below).

Creatures: The smoke around the entry point is actually two advanced belkers in smoke form. They assumed this form as soon as they realized that the portal was reopening. These two have already expended 10 of the 20 rounds that they can remain in smoke form for the day.

Advanced Belkers (2): CR 9; Huge elemental (air); HD 21d8+63; hp 99; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +15; Grp +29; Atk +20 melee (3d6+6, wing); Full Atk +20 melee (3d6+6, 2 wings) and +17 melee (1d6+3, bite) and +17 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA smoke claws; SQ darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, smoke form; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +16, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11. Height: 12 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide –4, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Spot +8; Ability Focus (smoke claws), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (wing) (2), Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (wing).

Smoke Claws (Ex): An advanced belker in smoke form (see below) can engulf opponents by moving on top of them. It fills the air around one Large or smaller opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. The target must succeed on a DC 25 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. The smoke inside the victim solidifies into a claw and begins to rip at the surrounding organs, dealing 3d6 points of damage per round. An affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each subsequent round to cough out the semivaporous menace.



Elemental Traits: An advanced belker has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning. It is not subject to critical hits or flanking. It cannot be raised, reincarnated, or resurrected (though a *limited wish, wish, miracle,* or *true resurrection* spell can restore life). Darkvision 60 ft.

Smoke Form (Su): Most of the time an advanced belker is more or less solid, but at will it can assume smoke form. It can switch forms once per round as a free action and can spend up to 20 rounds per day in smoke form. An advanced belker in smoke form can fly at a speed of 50 feet (perfect). The ability is otherwise similar to a *gaseous form* spell (caster level 21st).

Tactics: The advanced belkers attack the party immediately. They were damaged in the previous fight, so they flee if reduced to 50 or fewer hit points.

Development: After the party has defeated the two advanced belkers, Grynerstempos calls for help from the ruined stone platform, using Zax's voice. Go to encounter B2, below.

B2. THE FALSE ZAX (EL 18)

Grynerstempos, an advanced belker soul eater, has been waiting in the ruined stone building on the floating platform, watching the PCs fight the other belkers. Read or paraphrase the following when they finish that battle.

> A voice calls out faintly from the rubble on the floating stone platform. "Help me," it says. "Please. . . ." Crawling toward the edge of the platform is a human male dressed in the garb of an adventurer.

Creature: The human figure on the platform is Grynerstempos, shapeshifted into the form of Zax.

Grynerstempos: Advanced belker soul eater 8; CR 18; Huge elemental (air); HD 21d8+105 plus 8d8+40; hp 275; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +19; Grp +35; Atk +26 melee (4d6+8, wing); Full Atk +26 melee (4d6+8, 2 wings) and +23 melee (1d6+4, bite) and +23 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA

energy drain, smoke claws, soul blast; SQ darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, smoke form, soul agility, soul endurance, soul enhancement, soul radiance; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +22, Will +11; Str 26, Dex 23, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11. Height: 12 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide –2, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Listen +15, Move Silently +17, Spot +14; Ability Focus (smoke claws), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Disciple of Darkness, Improved Natural Attack (wing) (3), Multiattack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (wing).

Energy Drain (Su): Grynerstempos bestows two negative levels on its target with a successful touch attack. The Fortitude save DC to remove the negative levels is 20.

Smoke Claws (Ex): When Grynerstempos is in smoke form (see below), it can engulf opponents by moving on top of them. It fills the air around one Large or smaller opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. The target must succeed on a DC 27 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. Smoke inside the victim solidifies into a claw and begins to rip at the surrounding organs, dealing 3d6 points of damage per round. An affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each subsequent round to cough out the semivaporous menace.

Soul Blast (Su): When Grynerstempos uses its energy drain ability, it may project a 100-foot ray of force that deals 8d6 points of damage against one target (Reflex DC 18 negates). This ability can be used once per day, and only on a day when it has drained levels.

Elemental Traits: An advanced belker has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, and stunning. It is not subject to critical hits or flanking. It cannot be raised, reincarnated or resurrected (though a *limited wish, wish, miracle,* or *true resurrection* spell can restore life). Darkvision 60 ft.

Smoke Form (Su): Most of the time, Grynerstempos is more or less solid, but at will it can assume smoke form. It can switch forms once per round as a free action and can spend up to 20 rounds per day in smoke form. (Today, it has already used up 4 of these rounds.) While in smoke form, it can fly at a speed of 50 feet (perfect). The ability is otherwise similar to a *gaseous form* spell (caster level 21st).

Soul Agility (Su): When Grynerstempos uses its energy drain ability, it gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity for 24 hours.

Soul Endurance (Su): When Grynerstempos uses its energy drain ability, it gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Constitution for 24 hours.

Soul Enhancement (Su): Grynerstempos gains a +2 enhancement bonus on all saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks for 24 hours. This bonus stacks with any enhancement bonus gained to ability scores that apply to saves or checks.

Soul Radiance (Su): If Grynerstempos completely drains a creature of energy, it may adopt its victim's soul radiance, taking on its form, appearance, and abilities (as the *shapechange* spell) for 24 hours.

Tactics: If the characters come to the aid of "Zax," it assists them with setting up the sphere and refilling it. Once they are preoccupied with other tasks, it shifts into smoke form and attacks. Grynerstempos can remain in smoke form for 16 rounds.

Development: If reduced to 50 or fewer hit points, Grynerstempos flees toward the storm in the distance (see encounter B3, below). This swirling vortex of water and wind is a portal that connects directly to the Elemental Plane of Water. The soul eater has often hunted near this vortex and has actually passed through the portal on one previous occasion.

A quick search of the ruined platform reveals the body of Zax Grierson and the missing sphere, which is empty.

B3. THE VORTEX

Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs approach the vortex.

> Three blue humanoids dressed in silken garb of green and white float lifelessly near a swirling cloud of wind and water. The storm's ferocity seems directed inward, its swirling eddies disappearing into the center of the vortex.

The blue forms are the bodies of three 16-foot-tall marids (genies native to the Elemental Plane of Water; see *Manual of the Planes*). They were slain by a hammerfish in the Elemental Plane of Water (see encounter E2) and then sucked through the vortex.

Creature: If Grynerstempos is still alive, it lurks beside the portal, hoping to drag one of its pursuers through with it.

Grynerstempos: See encounter B2, above.

Tactics: If a character gives chase, Grynerstempos attempts to grapple that opponent and take him through the portal.

Development: Any character with ranks in Knowledge (the planes) may attempt a DC 23 check with that skill to realize that the vortex is a two-way portal to the Elemental Plane of Water. Otherwise, they must rely on their own powers of deduction to determine the nature of the vortex.

The winds on this side and the currents on the far side are strong enough to pull in unattended objects (or

unresisting characters) within 100 feet and hurl them some 200 feet into the destination plane. A character within 100 feet of the vortex can move away from it at one-half his normal movement rate on the plane in question. Go to encounter E to continue.

C. ELEMENTAL PLANE OF EARTH

Stepping through the moss-green portal places the PCs on the Elemental Plane of Earth. Refer to the Appendix for the planar traits of this plane.

C1. THE LAVA WORM (EL 16)

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters step through the Earth Portal.

Beyond the moss-green portal is a stone platform approximately 10 feet in diameter. It stands in the center of a cavern about 40 feet across, with a ceiling that reaches a height of 30 feet at its center. Several torches line the perimeter of the cave, and some dwarves tend two large metal cauldrons suspended over fires about 15 feet southeast of the platform.

Suddenly, the earth begins to shake, and the rumbling sounds of an earthquake echo through the cavern while a few small rocks fall from the ceiling above. When the quake begins to subside, another dwarf enters the cavern from a tunnel at the far end. Obviously panicked, he screams something to his fellows.

Characters who speak Dwarven understand that the newcomer is warning his companions that a great "lava worm" is collapsing the tunnels and killing miners. To make matters worse, it is coming this way. Whatever the PCs choose to do, continue with the following after 2 rounds have passed.

> The west wall of the cavern suddenly bursts open, sending stone shards and molten rock all the way to the edges of the platform. A creature with four large tentacles emerges from the hole, and the heat emitted by its leechlike body melts the stone floor of the cavern into a bed of lava. The cracks on the creature's stony black body glow from its internal heat, and its mouth is filled with countless rows of crystalline teeth.

The dwarves are merely miners and can offer little help in fighting off the approaching monster. By the time it bursts through the wall, most of the miners have already exited the cavern through the tunnel at the north end.

Creatures: The lava worm, as the dwarves call it, is better known as a magmal horror (see New Monster section).

Magmal Horror: hp 184; see New Monster section.

Dwarf Miner: Male and female dwarf expert 3; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d6+6; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d10+1/×3, dwarven waraxe) or –2 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); Full Atk +3 melee (1d10+1/×3, dwarven waraxe) or –2 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SQ dwarf traits; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Craft (mining) +6, Craft (metalworking) +2, Craft (stoneworking) +2, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Listen +7, Search +8, Spot +5; Alertness, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe).

Dwarf Traits: Each dwarf miner has a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs and goblinoids, a +2 racial bonus on saves against spells and spell-like abilities, a +2 racial bonus on Fortitude saves against all poisons, a +4 dodge bonus against giants, and a +2 racial bonus on Appraise checks and Craft or Profession checks related to stone or metal (already figured into the statistics above). He has darkvision (60-foot range) and stability (+4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground). He also has stonecunning, which gives him a +2 racial bonus on checks to notice unusual stonework and allows him to make a check for unusual stonework as though actively searching when within 10 feet of it. In addition, he can use the Search skill to find stonework traps as a rogue can and intuit depth.

Possessions: Dwarven waraxe, shortbow, 20 arrows.

Development: When the magmal horror has been defeated and the characters have set up their sphere for filling, go to encounter C2, below.

C2. MEETING THE MODRON (EL 1)

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters have finished filling the sphere and are waiting for the portal to reopen.

> A few of the crates that the dwarves had stacked against the southern wall of the cavern begin to shake. After a moment, the shaking stops, and one boxlike shape covered with a burlap cloth begins to move slowly toward the platform.

Beneath the cloth is not a crate, but a modron that has been stuck here for the past several weeks.

Creature: This modron, a duodrone, was one of forty assigned to maintain the machine when it was first built. Over the years, the maintenance crew's numbers dwindled until this creature was the only one left. The solitude and the constant work required to keep the machine operational by itself were more than the duodrone could handle. When it realized that it could not refuel the machine because it knew the key sequences to open only two of the doors, it simply opened the portal to the Elemental Plane of Earth and stepped through, leaving its past behind.

If the characters manage to speak with the rogue modron, it can relate the following pieces of information.

- It has decided that it needs a name and wants to be called Slag—a name it has adopted from a word that it once heard the dwarves say.
- Slag does not know what happened to the other modrons; they simply vanished, a few at a time.
- Slag knows the key sequence to open the Earth and Fire portals and is willing to detail them if so requested.
- Slag does not wish to return to the machine, but it can be talked into doing so if the characters can assure it that it will no longer have to tend to the machine alone.

If the party does not have a way to speak with Slag, Mara can send someone from the Church of Wee Jas to interpret for them.

Slag: Duodrone; CR 1; Small outsider; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor); AC 14, touch 11,

flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp –1; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, claw); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SQ darkvision 60 ft., modron traits, outsider traits, resistances (acid 10, cold 10, fire 10); AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Craft (machine) +3, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Listen +6, Spot +6; Alertness.

Modron Traits: Slag is immune to mind-affecting effects. He is not subject to nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or critical hits.

Outsider Traits: Slag cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

For more information on modrons, see the web enhancement for *Manual of the Planes* on the Wizards of the Coast website.

D. ELEMENTAL PLANE OF FIRE

Stepping through a portal of swirling flame (accessible from the machine with Slag's aid; see encounter C2) places the PCs on the Elemental Plane of Fire. Refer to the Appendix for the planar traits of this plane.

D1. THE GALLEON (EL 17)

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters step through the Fire Portal.

> The portal that resembles swirling flame leads to a stone platform 10 feet in diameter that rests atop a round stone pedestal about 40 feet across. The pedestal extends downward 100 feet into a flaming sea. A galleon made of brass floats in the sky nearby, moored to the pedestal by two brass ropes. Three bipedal lizards and a large humanoid construct of some kind look up in amazement. The lizards flee toward the galleon, leaving the hulking flame brute behind.

The galleon belongs to some salamanders that are busy exploring the area.

Creatures: The arrival of the party has startled three flamebrother salamanders that were exploring the pedestal.

Salamander, Flamebrother (3): hp 26, 21, 18; see *Monster Manual* page 219.

Hellfire Golem: CR 17; Large construct; HD 20d10; hp 140; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +15; Grp +26; Atk +22 melee (1d8+7 plus 2d6 hellfire/19–20, 2 slams); Full Atk +22 melee (1d8+7 plus 2d6 hellfire/19–20, 2 slams); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA hellfire, spell-like abilities; SQ construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine and good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to fire, immunity to magic, low-light vision, resistances (acid 20, cold 20); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 25, Dex 14, Con –, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +30, Hide –2, Jump +34, Spot +24; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (slam), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

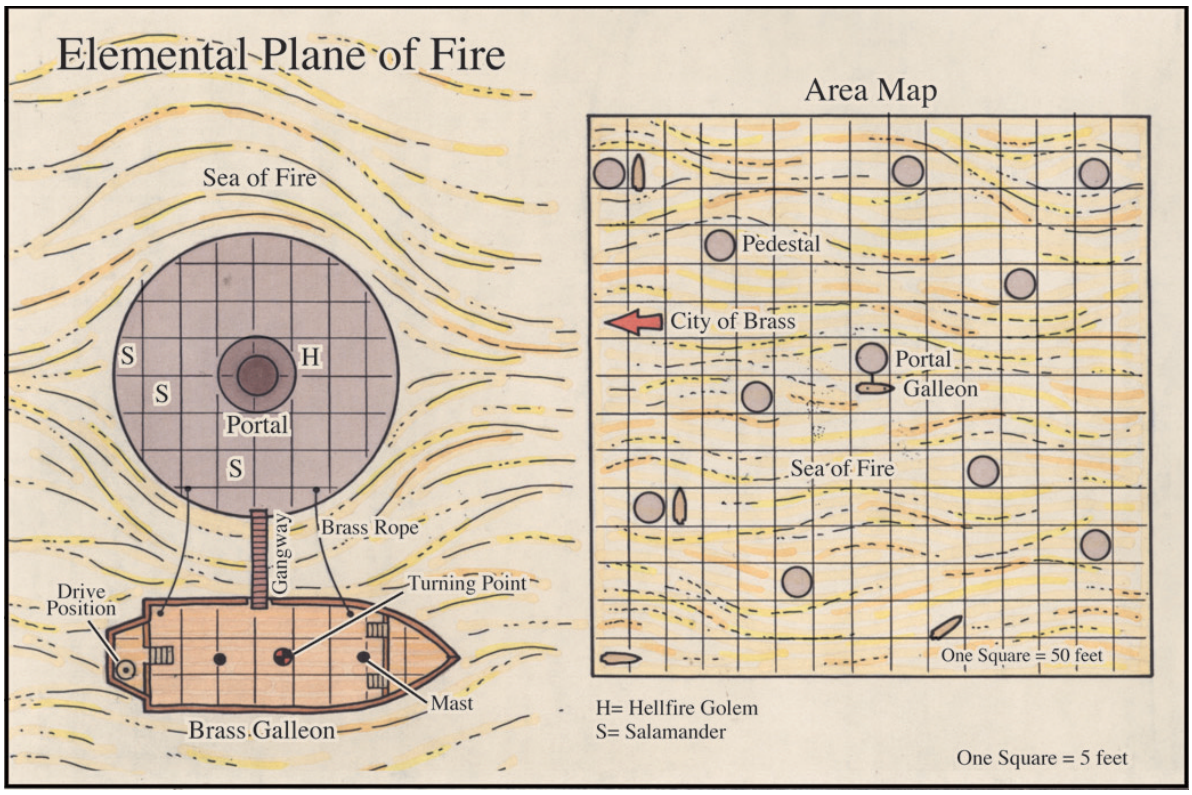
Hellfire (Ex): A hellfire golem burns with unearthly fire. Anyone hit by its slam attack takes 2d6 points of hellfire damage. Half of this damage is fire damage, while the other half results directly from unholy power and is therefore not lessened by protection against fire. Creatures hitting a hellfire golem with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take hellfire damage as though hit by the golem's slam attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*burning hands* (DC 13), *fireball* (DC 15), *flare* (DC 12), *produce flame* 3/day—*flame strike* (DC 17). Caster level 20th.

Construct Traits: A hellfire golem has immunity to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. Cannot heal damage, but can be repaired. Darkvision 60 feet and low-light vision.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A hellfire golem is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A *quench* spell seems to extinguish the flames suffusing the golem's frame for 2d4 rounds, but it actually only halves the damage from its hellfire (negating the fire damage). A cold effect that deals more than 20 points of damage (after overcoming its cold resistance) slows it (as the *slow* spell) for 1d6 rounds, with no saving throw. A spell with the lawful or evil descriptor (such as *order's wrath* or *unholy blight*) breaks any *slow* effect on the golem and cures 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage it would otherwise deal. The golem is fully affected by spells with the chaotic or good descriptor, unless its construct traits make it immune to the spell's effects (it cannot be blinded by a *holy aura*, for example, because that effect allows a Fortitude save).

The golem loses its extraplanar subtype because it is on its home plane. Thus, spells that would normally drive it back to its home plane (such as *dispel evil, dispel law, holy word,* and *word of chaos*) do not affect it, nor do *banishment* or *dismissal*, since they are not good or chaotic spells.



Tactics: The flamebrothers immediately attempt to board their galleon and untie the ropes, leaving their hellfire golem behind to deal with the intruders. These salamanders are much more interested in escaping than in fighting.

The hellfire golem first tries to soften up the opponents from a distance with spells, then it resorts to using its fists.

Development: Continue with encounter B2 when the PCs finish their battle.

Information on creating interesting galleons that fly, travel to other planes, or even sail on seas of stone can be found in the *D&D Arms and Equipment Guide*.

D2. THE BRASS GALLEONS (EL 17)

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters finish their battle with the hellfire golem.

> Ten other stone pedestals are scattered randomly around this sea of flame, and no two of them are closer than 100 feet apart. Brass galleons are moored to five of these pedestals, each of which has a large hole in the top. The lizardlike creatures and their golem companions disappear down into these openings from time to time, reappearing a short time later. Far in the distance, almost at the horizon, floats what appears to be an immense ball of brass.

The characters have drawn attention to themselves by battling the hellfire golem, and several groups of salamanders board their galleons and make for the PCs' pedestal while the PCs are busy refilling the sphere.

Creatures: Each galleon has a crew consisting of eight flamebrother salamanders, two average salamanders (bodyguards for the captain), and one noble salamander (the captain), plus one hellfire golem.

Salamander, Flamebrother (8): hp 26, 23, 22, 22, 21, 20, 20, 18. These are the galleon's crew.

Salamander, Average (2): hp 56, 52. These creatures are bodyguards for the galleon's captain.

Salamander, Noble: hp 110. This salamander is the captain of the galleon.

Hellfire Golem: hp 140; see New Monster, below.

Tactics: These salamanders are willing to fight as long as their captain is alive. They rely on the hellfire golem's ranged spells to soften the opponents up while they move in, then try to flank the party after they disembark. The salamanders flee back to their galleon and attempt to escape if their captain dies.

Development: The object on the horizon is in fact the legendary City of Brass. The galleons are made of brass plates and have sails woven of spun brass wire. Like their crews, they are immune to fire.

E. ELEMENTAL PLANE OF WATER

The portal leading to the Elemental Plane of Water is a pool of swirling greenish-blue. Refer to the Appendix for the planar traits of this plane.

E1. WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Read or paraphrase the following if the characters enter this plane through the Water Portal, or by means of their own spells from within the machine.

> The portal leads to a 10-foot-diameter stone platform encased in a bubble of air. Outside this enclosure swirls blue-green water as far as the eye can see. Several fish of brilliant hues swim past, gazing curiously into the bubble. Some distance away, a swirling vortex of water and what seems to be wind is visible.

If the characters enter this plane through the vortex (encounter B3), they find themselves engulfed immediately in the endless sea of the plane with no way to breathe, unless they have come prepared. Read or paraphrase the following instead.

> Blue-green water swirls all around. No air intrudes here, and no surface is within sight. Brilliant-colored fish swim by, and sea plants wave in the water. Some distance away, a swirling vortex of water and what seems to be wind is visible.

This vortex is the portal described in encounter B3. It leads to the Elemental Plane of Air. Whichever method the PCs used to reach this plane, they enter at a point about 200 feet from the vortex.

No creatures other than harmless fish approach the characters while they are filling the sphere.

Development: The PCs must take extra care when refilling the sphere if they are working outside the platform. If left unattended, the sphere begins moving inexorably toward the vortex and will be sucked through it after 10 rounds if not retrieved in time.

While the PCs refill their sphere, a hammerfish approaches in search of dinner. If the PCs are working from the regular platform, the fish does not enter the air bubble around it. If any of them are in the water, go to encounter E2.

E2. SOMETHING'S FISHY (EL 18)

Read or paraphrase the following if any PCs are in the water while the sphere is being filled.

> A huge, hazy form begins to take shape in the water ahead. The shape quickly resolves itself into a mammoth eel with hard plates on its head. It fairly flies through the water.

Creature: An advanced hammerfish often hunts for prey near the vortex. It killed the three marids that were floating on the Elemental Plane of Air (see encounter B3). The hammerfish is not at full hit points (423 of 486) and has used one of its three energy attacks for the day.

The hammerfish is presented here in nonpsionic form, but a psionic version and other psionic water-based creatures can be found in the *Mind's Eye* feature on the Wizards of the Coast website.

Advanced Hammerfish: CR 18; Colossal magical beast; HD 36d10+288; hp 423 of 486; Init +6; Spd swim 60 ft.; AC 27, touch 4, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +36; Grp +69; Atk +46 melee (4d6+25, bite); Full Atk +46 melee (4d6+25, bite); Space/Reach 30 ft./20 ft.; SA *ram*, spell-like abilities; SQ blindsight 360 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +28, Ref +22, Will +13; Str 44, Dex 15, Con 26, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 8. Length: 80 ft.

Skills and Feats: Hide –14, Listen +40, Move Silently +41, Swim +64; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Natural Attack (ram), Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*magic missile*), Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite).

***Ram* (Sp):** This ability is what gave the hammerfish its name. The creature performs a charge attack to strike the target with its head, dealing 8d6+25 points of damage. The energy discharged on contact deals an additional 9d4+9 points of damage (Fortitude DC 36 half). The hammerfish can ram up to three times a day.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*lightning bolt* (DC 12), *magic missile*, *protection from energy*. Caster level 14th; save DC 9 plus spell level.

Tactics: The hammerfish begins combat with its ram attack, then follows up with melee attacks.

Development: Once the characters have dealt with the hammerfish, they are free to return to the machine, either directly or via the vortex and the Elemental Plane of Air.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have successfully filled all four spheres with raw material from the four elemental planes and returned with them to Porthaven, Mara can activate

the machine. In only a few minutes, the rumbling of the earth ceases, and the volcano again becomes dormant. The rivers of lava that threatened to destroy the city cool before reaching its borders, and the fires burning in the city die out. The sea quiets, and the port once again becomes as calm as glass. The smoke and ash filling the skies overhead dissipate within hours as though they had never existed. The citizens of Porthaven can then return to their homes and need not fear the forces of nature for the next fifty years.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Although the adventure is over when the party has refueled the machine, you can expand on any of several plot threads for further adventuring.

The party can travel to Mechanus and try to convince the modrons to reinstate their maintenance program on the machine. The creatures insist that the agreement did not specify a minimum crew and that they are not obligated to send any more modrons as long as Slag is still alive. At that point, the characters can accept the situation, try to negotiate a new agreement on behalf of the city, or track down Khyber Mercane (who lives on a plane of your choice) to present the city's case to the modrons.

Alternatively, perhaps someone within the temple of Wee Jas wants to destroy the city and deliberately slew the modrons that maintained it. Now that the refueling has been accomplished, the villain must find a new way to sabotage the machine.

The pedestals on the Elemental Plane of Fire may be the ruins of an ancient city or the tombs of powerful creatures that live on that plane. Either way, they are reputed to conceal hidden arcane secrets and much treasure. The party could also use this adventure as a springboard to explore the legendary City of Brass.

NEW MONSTER

The following new monster is available for use in any D&D campaign.

MAGMAL HORROR

Huge Elemental (Earth, Extraplanar, Fire)
Hit Dice: 16d8+112 (184 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 40 ft., swim 60 ft.
AC: 27 (–2 size, +3 Dex, +16 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 24
Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+30
Attack: Tentacle +20 melee (2d6+10 plus 2d6 fire)
Full Attack: 4 tentacles +20 melee (2d6+10 plus 2d6 fire) and bite +18 melee (2d8+5 plus 2d6 fire)
Space/Reach: 15 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with tentacles)
Special Attacks: Constrict 2d6+15, heat, improved grab, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, resistance to sonic 10, tremorsense 60 ft., vulnerability to cold
Saves: Fort +19, Ref +15, Will +9
Abilities: Str 31, Dex 16, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 8
Skills: Jump +20, Listen +22, Spot +18, Swim +18
Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack
Environment: Elemental Plane of Fire
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 16
Treasure: None
Alignment: Usually chaotic
Advancement: 16–32 HD (Huge); 33–48 HD (Gargantuan)

This leechlike creature has four huge tentacles ringing its mouth. The cracks on its stony black body glow from its internal heat, and its mouth is filled with countless rows of crystalline teeth.

Rumored to be related to the thoqqua, a magmal horror feeds primarily on other elemental creatures, though it is quite willing to consume anything that crosses its path. Most magmal horrors are native to the Elemental Plane of Fire, but they are also found on the Elemental Plane of Earth, and at least one has been sighted swimming through the Elemental Plane of Water.

A magmal horror resembles a leech about 30 feet long and 10 feet in diameter. Four long tentacles ring a round mouth full of crystal teeth, and cracked, stony black plates serve as a kind of armor plating along its length. Its incredibly dense body radiates blistering heat that melts the stone through which it habitually travels, leaving canals and pools of molten lava behind.

Combat

A magmal horror grabs opponents with its tentacles and attempts to either swallow them or plunge them into the lava that its body creates from the surrounding stone. Should foes prove resistant to fire, the magmal horror bludgeons them with its tentacles, then constricts them and thrusts them into its gaping maw.

Constrict (Ex): A magmal horror deals 2d6+15 points of damage with a successful grapple check.

Heat (Ex): A magmal horror generates intense heat that melts earth or stone within 5 feet of its body into molten lava. Every creature and object within 10 feet of the creature takes 4d6 points of fire damage per

round that it remains within this range (Reflex DC 25 half). Any creature that strikes a magmal horror with a natural attack or an unarmed strike takes 8d6 points of fire damage.

The heat that the magmal horror generates can also melt or char weapons. Whenever a weapon strikes a magmal horror, the user must make a successful DC 25 Fortitude save or the weapon is destroyed. Any enhancement bonus that the weapon has is applied to the saving throw as a bonus. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the magmal horror must hit an opponent at least one size category smaller than itself with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict the same round or attempt to swallow the following round.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A magmal horror can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of a smaller size category than itself by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+10 points of crushing damage and 20d6 points of fire damage from the magmal horror's blazing gullet. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gullet (AC 15). Once the creature exits, internal motion closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A Huge magmal horror's interior can hold 2 Large, 8 Medium, 32 Small, 128 Tiny, or 512 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

Skills: A magmal horror has a +4 racial bonus on Listen checks.

A magmal horror gains a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

PLANAR INFORMATION

In this adventure, the PCs must travel to four of the six inner planes—the Elemental Plane of Air, the Elemental Plane of Earth, the Elemental Plane of Fire, and the Elemental Plane of Water. Information on the planar traits of these planes is presented here for easy reference. This material is also available in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* v.3.5.

PLANAR TRAITS

Each plane of existence has its own properties—the natural laws that apply to its portion of the universe. The traits relevant to the four elemental planes are presented below.

PHYSICAL TRAITS

The following physical trait applies to certain elemental planes.

Subjective Directional Gravity: The strength of gravity on a plane with this trait is the same as on the Material Plane, but each individual chooses the direction of gravity's pull. Such a plane exerts no gravity on unattended objects or nonsentient creatures. This sort of environment can be very disorienting to the newcomer, but it is common on "weightless" planes.

Characters on a plane with subjective directional gravity can move normally along a solid surface by imagining "down" to be near their feet. If suspended in midair, a character can "fly" by merely choosing a "down" direction and "falling" that way. When such a procedure is employed, an individual "falls" 150 feet in the first round and 300 feet in each succeeding round. Such movement is straight-line only. To stop, the character must slow her movement by changing the designated "down" direction (again, moving 150 feet in the new direction in the first round and 300 feet per round thereafter).

Setting a new direction for gravity is a free action, but a DC 16 Wisdom check is required to succeed. The attempt can be made only once per round. Any character who fails this Wisdom check in two or more successive rounds receives a +6 bonus on subsequent checks until she succeeds.

ELEMENTAL AND ENERGY TRAITS

The following traits apply to the corresponding Elemental Planes.

Air-Dominant: A plane with this trait is mostly open space with just a few bits of floating stone or other elements. It typically has a breathable atmosphere, though clouds of acidic or toxic gas may also be present.

Creatures of the earth subtype are uncomfortable on air-dominant planes because they have little or no natural earth with which they can connect. They take no actual damage, however.

Earth-Dominant: Planes with this trait are mostly solid. Travelers arriving on such a plane risk suffocation if they fail to reach a cavern or other pocket within the earth before their air supply ends. Worse yet, individuals without the ability to burrow are entombed in the earth and must dig their way out at the rate of 5 feet per round.

Creatures of the air subtype are uncomfortable on earth-dominant planes because such places seem tight and claustrophobic to them. However, they take no

actual damage and suffer no inconvenience beyond difficulty in moving.

Fire-Dominant: Planes with this trait are composed of flames that continually burn without consuming a fuel source. Fire-dominant planes are extremely hostile to Material Plane creatures, and those without resistance or immunity to fire are soon immolated.

Unprotected wood, paper, cloth, and other flammable materials catch fire almost immediately, and creatures wearing unprotected flammable clothing also catch on fire. In addition, any creature on a fire-dominant plane takes 3d10 points of fire damage per round that it remains there.

Creatures of the water subtype are extremely uncomfortable on fire-dominant planes. Creatures actually made of water take double damage each round.

Water-Dominant: Planes with this trait are mostly liquid. Visitors who can't breathe water and are unable to reach a pocket of air risk drowning (see Drowning in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Creatures of the fire subtype are extremely uncomfortable on water-dominant planes. A creature actually made of fire takes 1d10 points of damage per round that it remains on such a plane.

MAGIC TRAITS

The following magic traits apply where noted.

Enhanced Magic: Particular spells and spell-like abilities are easier to use or have more powerful effects on planes with this trait than on the Material Plane. Natives of a plane with the enhanced magic trait are aware of which spells and spell-like abilities are enhanced, but planar travelers may have to discover this information on their own.

If a spell is enhanced, certain metamagic feats can be applied to it without changing the spell slot required or the casting time. Spellcasters on the plane are considered to have that feat or feats for the purpose of applying them to that spell. Spellcasters native to the plane must gain the feat or feats normally if they want to use them on other planes as well.

Impeded Magic: Particular spells and spell-like abilities are more difficult to cast on planes with this trait, often because the nature of the plane interferes with the spell. To cast an impeded spell, the caster must make a successful Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the spell level). If the check fails, the spell does not function but is still lost as a prepared spell or spell slot. If the check succeeds, the spell functions normally.

ELEMENTAL PLANE OF AIR

The Elemental Plane of Air is an empty plane, consisting of sky above and sky below. From a human perspective, it is the most comfortable and survivable of the Inner Planes, and it is home to all manner of airborne creatures. Indeed, flying creatures have significant advantages on this plane. While travelers without flight can survive easily here, they are at a disadvantage.

The Elemental Plane of Air has the following traits.

- **Subjective Directional Gravity:** Each creature on the plane determines its own "down" direction. Objects not under the motive force of others do not move.
- **Air-Dominant.**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities that use, manipulate, or create air (including spells of the Air domain and spells that summon air elementals or outsiders with the air subtype) are both empowered and enlarged (as if the Empower Spell and Enlarge Spell metamagic feats had been used on them, except that they don't require higher-level spell slots or increased casting times). Spells and spell-like abilities that are already empowered or enlarged are unaffected by this benefit.
- **Impeded Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities that use or create earth (including spells of the Earth domain and spells that summon earth elementals or outsiders with the earth subtype) are impeded.

ELEMENTAL PLANE OF EARTH

The Elemental Plane of Earth is a solid plane made of rock, soil, and stone. An unwary and unprepared traveler may be entombed within this vast, solid mass and crushed into nothingness. The powdered remains of such travelers serve as warnings to anyone foolish enough to follow.

Despite its solid, unyielding nature, the Elemental Plane of Earth varies in consistency, ranging from relatively soft soil to veins of valuable metal.

The Elemental Plane of Earth has the following traits.

- **Earth-Dominant.**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities that use, manipulate, or create earth (including spells of the Earth domain and spells that summon earth elementals or outsiders with the earth subtype) are both empowered and extended (as if the Empower Spell and Extend Spell metamagic feats had been used on them, except that they don't require higher-level spell slots or increased casting times). Spells and spell-like abilities that are already empowered or extended are unaffected by this benefit.

- **Impeded Magic.** Spells and spell-like abilities that use or create air (including spells of the Air domain and spells that summon air elementals or outsiders with the air subtype) are impeded.

ELEMENTAL PLANE OF FIRE

Everything is alight on the Elemental Plane of Fire. The "ground" consists of nothing more than ever-shifting plates of compressed flame. The air ripples with the heat of continual firestorms, and the most common liquid is magma, not water. The oceans are made of liquid flame, and the mountains ooze with molten lava. Fire survives here without the need for fuel or air, but flammable materials brought onto the plane are consumed readily.

The Elemental Plane of Fire has the following traits.

- **Fire-Dominant.**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities with the fire descriptor are both maximized and enlarged (as if the Maximize Spell and Enlarge Spell metamagic feats had been used on them, except that they don't require higher-level spell slots or increased casting times). Spells and spell-like abilities that are already maximized or enlarged are unaffected by this benefit.
- **Impeded Magic.** Spells and spell-like abilities that use or create water (including spells of the Water domain and spells that summon water elementals or outsiders with the water subtype) are impeded.

ELEMENTAL PLANE OF WATER

The Elemental Plane of Water is a sea without a floor or a surface—an entirely fluid environment that is lit by a diffuse glow. Human travelers often find it one of the more hospitable of the Inner Planes, once they get past the problem of breathing.

The eternal oceans of this plane vary between ice cold and boiling hot, and between saline and fresh. The water is perpetually in motion, wracked by currents and tides. The plane's permanent settlements form around bits of flotsam and jetsam suspended within the endless liquid, and the constantly drift on the tides.

The Elemental Plane of Water has the following traits.

- **Subjective Directional Gravity:** Each creature on the plane determines its own "down" direction. Objects not under the motive force of others do not move. Sinking or rising on the Elemental Plane of Water, however, is slower (and less dangerous) than it is on the Elemental Plane of Air.
- **Water-Dominant.**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells and spell-like abilities that use, manipulate, or create water (including spells of the Water domain and spells that summon water elementals or outsiders with the water subtype) are both extended and enlarged (as if the Extend Spell and Enlarge Spell metamagic feats had been used on them, except that they don't require higher-level spell slots or increased casting times). Spells and spell-like abilities that are already extended or enlarged are unaffected by this benefit.
- **Impeded Magic.** Spells and spell-like abilities with the fire descriptor are impeded.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark A. Jindra has been a fan of the *Dungeons & Dragons* Game for the past 25 years. In 1998, he landed a job as a web developer for Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is currently the developer of the D&D website. Mark has authored or coauthored various tournaments for the RPGA Network, and he also coauthors the monthly *Mind's Eye* feature on the Wizards of the Coast website.

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